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The Archaeology of Jemez Resistance and Revitalization in the Pueblo Revolt Era, 1680–1696

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THE PUEBLO REVOLT OF 1680 has long been recognized as one of the most successful indigenous rebellions in the history of North American colonization. In August of that year, the Pueblos united with their Navajo and Apache allies in an armed insurrection that banished Spanish colonists and missionaries from Pueblo lands for more than a decade. Yet, we know surprisingly little about the events that occurred in the Pueblo world between the Revolt of 1680 and the Spanish Reconquest of 1692–1694.

The Pueblo Revolt era was far more than just a series of battles between Native Americans and Europeans. The Revolt of 1680 was part of a larger social movement organized under the direction of Po'pay, a charismatic Tewa leader from San Juan Pueblo. Po'pay preached a message of nativism and revivalism, calling on the Pueblos to purge their world of foreign influence and return to traditional, pre-Hispanic ways of life. My research investigated the material signs of this revitalization movement, as manifested in the architecture and ceramics of four pueblos constructed during the Revolt era in the Jemez region of northern New Mexico. The investigation of these villages was conducted in close collaboration with the Pueblo of Jemez Department of Resource Protection, Cultural Resource Advisory Committee, and Tribal Administration. Tribal members participated in all phases of the project.

What happened between 1680 and 1696 in the Pueblo world? In the Jemez region, the revitalization movement flourished in the years immediately following the Revolt. Between 1680 and 1683, two new pueblos were constructed using an iconic, dual-plaza form that I argue was used to reference the pre-Hispanic past and emphasize traditional

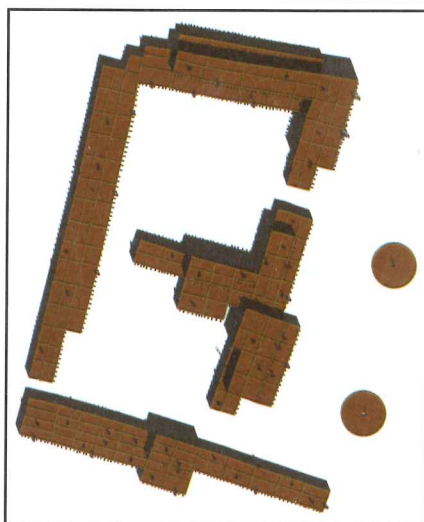
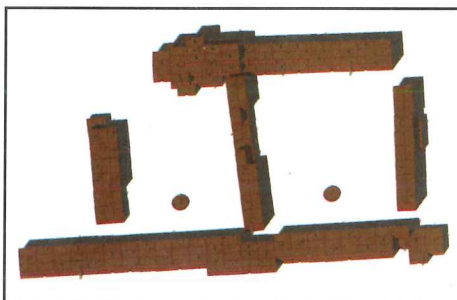
Pueblo social organization. Similarly, this period saw significant shifts in ceramic production and exchange related to Po'pay's calls for nativism and revivalism. Yet rather than returning to the production of traditional Jemez pottery following the Spaniards' ouster, Jemez women ceased the production of pre-Hispanic types, adopting new ceramic

styles shared with neighboring Keresan Pueblos. These changes were likely related to the dramatic increases in migration that occurred among Pueblo people in the wake of the revolt, blurring traditional linguistic-ethnic boundaries between Pueblo regions and resulting in the creation of new, pan-Pueblo

identities.

But this fervent revitalization seems to have dissipated by the end of the decade, as evidenced by two villages constructed between 1689 and 1694 that do not exhibit the same revivalistic patterns as their predecessors. Ceramics also suggest a decrease in interaction among some Pueblo communities in comparison to the early Revolt period, possibly related to the inter-Pueblo conflicts reported by the Spaniards upon their return to the region in 1692. Yet while the pan-Puebloism and revivalism that characterized the early 1680s seems to have waned by the following decade, the nativistic zeal of the Jemez was still evident, as attested to by their staunch resistance to the attacking Spaniards in 1694 and 1696.

The practices of cultural revitalization enacted in the wake of the Pueblo Revolt resulted in profound changes that transformed the architecture, ceramics, and social formations of the Pueblos for centuries thereafter. Thus, the Revolt era forms a crucial bridge between the Contact period and the modern Pueblo world. This has implications for archaeological studies of pre-Hispanic pueblos as well, as analogies with modern Pueblos depend on an accurate understanding of the changes that occurred during the late seventeenth century—an understanding we are only beginning to develop.



The dual-plaza form of the ancestral Jemez pueblos of Patokwa (top) and Boletsakwa (bottom) emphasizes traditional social organization. They were constructed between 1680 and 1683.

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